
TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Understanding Decking Tallies

Unit of Measure

The international unit of measure in which woods like Ipe, Garapa, Balau, and others are traded is the cubic meter (m³). Unlike the North American unit of nominal board feet, the cubic meter represents the actual volume of timber being bought and sold. Cubic meters are converted to units of measure commonly used in the trade, such as nominal board feet and lineal feet.

Tally

The industry standard in the US for Ipe decking tallies is 8' through 20' in even lengths (ELO). The distribution of lengths in a typical container is 30% 8' and 10', 40% 12' and 14', and 30% 16', 18', and 20', and occasionally some 22'. These percentages are by volume, not by pieces. This is referred to as a (30/40/30) Tally Ratio.

As an example, say a container has 20m³ of KD decking. It would contain 6m³ of 8' and 10', 8m³ of 12' and 14', and 6m³ of 16', 18', and 20'.

To keep inventory tallies in balance, we need to sell decking in these same ratios. That is why your best price will always be for random lengths of 8 to 20', 30/40/30. While you can typically buy 8' and 10' only at the random length price, a premium is typically charged when buying random lengths of 12' to 20' or specified lengths of 12' and longer.